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Ideas For How To Write An Obituary

Interview questions for family members

You can send home these questions for families to take their time answering, or offer the personal touch of sitting down with them and asking them about their dearly departed.

1. How would you describe your loved one's personality? Did they have a loud sense of humor? Quiet and kind? Catty social butterfly? Stoic and dependable?
2. What were they passionate about? Any favorite hobbies or activities?
3. How would you describe the impact they had upon you?
4. What about the impact they had on their community?
5. What accomplishments in life were they most proud of? This can be awards and honors, but also consider moments like starting a family, traveling, their beautiful garden and home.
6. Who would they want to mention and thank? Family members, mentors, friends, people who has a meaningful connection or influence on them.
7. What is your favorite memory of the deceased?
8. Most importantly, how would they want to be remembered?

Next up: The outline for an outstanding obituary

Now that we have some personalized and detailed information, we can translate that into a wonderful memorial piece using this outline as a guide. Keep in mind that the tone of the obituary should reflect the personality of the loved one. If they had a big sense of humor infused that into the writing! This will help the obituary reflect the person you are writing about:

Part #1: the details of the departed

1. Name
2. Dates of Birth and Death
3. Use questions 1 & 2 to paint a picture of how the loved one presented themselves to the world, what was their personality like?

Part #2: the life they lead

1. Here we talk about how they lived - what they accomplished and how they impacted others.
2. Use question 3-5 to describe how others experienced them, the lasting impression they left upon their community. Mention proud moments of accomplishments.

Part #3: Those they shared their life with

1. Here we can share who impacted them in their lifetime. Surviving family, meaningful mentors, the dearly beloved.
2. Use question 6 to acknowledge those that meant the most to the departed.

Part #4: The legacy they want to leave behind

1. How does the departed want to be remembered?
2. Use questions 7 & 8 to conclude with memories of the departed that reflect their legacy and eternal impact they left upon the world.
3. Invite others to the memorial. Include the date, time, and location of services.